

What is claimed is:

1. A browsing method encoded on a computer-readable medium, for managing Internet research in a research session, wherein navigation on the Internet by a user using a browser, including the storing of URLs visited, is automatically associated with a project name, thus defining a current research project and creating an associated research summary.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein on-line activity is attributed to the project name in the associated research summary.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the method cooperates with an updating method resident on a server such that the server-resident updating method scans and updates bookmarks on the browser when the server is accessed.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the server-resident software includes confirmation means to confirm that the user wishes to update the bookmarks prior to uploading the bookmarks on the browser.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the URLs associated with the research summary are saved in a global navigational history accessible to other users through an intranet.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein, in addition to the project name, an individual user name is associated with the research summary.
7. The method of claim 2, wherein a performance measure means is provided which analyses user statistics in a manner which measures the tendency of a user to remain focused on one project at a time, taking into account certain research session statistics including at least online time, a total number of project names researched online and time spent on the user's personal project name.
8. The browsing method of claim 1 wherein the research summary is a record of the activity attributed to the user name and project name which is stored in a format which may be printed or electronically filed, for later access.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein, after the user accesses a web page, a URL associated with the web page is automatically and at least semi-permanently associated with the user on a global navigation history which is accessible by other users, and whereas, if the user merely activates the URL of the web page, the user may store the URL in an at least semi-private format for later access, thereby providing the user with an incentive not to access a page which is of private interest and not relevant to the current project.

10. The client browsing method of claim 1, wherein the project name is automatically extracted and used as the decryption key to decrypt encrypted documents posted on a computer network, prior to the documents display on the user's computer.

11. The client browsing method of claim 9 wherein the research summary is stored in a format which may be printed or electronically filed, for later access.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein, after the user has accessed a web page, defined as the current page having a URL address, upon activation of a link which addresses, via another URL address, another web page and thus, potentially initiating a new research session, the user is queried as to how to attribute the URL addresses, and depending on the results of the query, the another web page is downloaded, steps terminating the current research project and initiating a search associated with a new project name, or a creating a temporary bookmark, are executed.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the attribution is made with respect to the current page.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the attribution is made with the another web page.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein, when the results of the query indicate that the download is to be associated with a new research project, the method provides the user with a choice as to whether to postpone initiating a research session by storing the address for use in association with a later project name after termination of the current project, or to terminate the current project and, thereafter, initiate the new research project in association with a new project name, and depending on the results of the query, the addressed web page is downloaded and presented to the user or steps initiating a search associated with a new project name are executed.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein if the user chooses to postpone initiating the session, the address is stored together with any other addresses so stored and presented to the user in editable form upon logging out of the current research session or project name.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the addresses so stored are automatically deleted upon logging onto another project name, unless the user takes an action to save the addresses for later access.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein, after the user has accessed a web page, defined as the current page having a URL address, including a root URL, then upon activation, in an ordinary fashion, of a link addressing, via another URL address including another root URL, another web page and thus, potentially initiating a new research session, the user is first queried to determine how to attribute the URLs, and depending on the results of the query, the addressed web page is downloaded and presented to the user or steps initiating a search associated with a new project name are executed.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the attribution is made with respect to the current page.
20. The method of claim 18, wherein the attribution is made with the another web page.
21. The method of claim 18, wherein, prior to the querying, the root URL of the activated page is compared to the root URL of the current page, and if the root URLs match, no query is initiated.
22. The method of claim 1, wherein, after the user has accessed a web page, defined as the current page, then, upon selection, in a nonordinary fashion so as to indicate the user's desire to go directly to the web page addressed by the link, the web page so addressed is immediately transmitted to the user.
23. ~~The method of claim 1 wherein, if the user decides not to initiate a new research session associated with a new project, a URL associated with the link is stored for later access wherein, after the user indicates his desire to terminate research associated with the current project, defined as the current research session, the user is presented with a URL listing comprising URLs which were stored at the initiation of the user during the current research session, whereupon, the user may select a URL on the URL listing to initiate a new research session associated with a new project name.~~
24. ~~A method which permits time-shifting of the downloading of web pages to a client computer, the method comprising the steps of (1) presenting a user with the option of temporarily storing a URL of an activated link in a file in which such URL may be stored and listed in conjunction with other URLs stored in a similar manner, thus creating a URL listing, wherein, when the user indicates a desire to logoff, the URL listing is presented to the user for use in launching another research session, at the user's choosing; thereafter, when the user logs off, the URL listing is deleted, unless the user takes affirmative action to save the URL listing.~~
25. ~~A computer system encoded with a method which, when executed, permits time-shifting of the downloading of web pages to a client computer, the method comprising the steps of (1) presenting a user with the option of temporarily storing a URL of an activated link in a file in which such URL may be stored and listed in conjunction with other URLs stored in a similar manner, thus creating a URL listing, wherein, when the user indicates a desire to logoff, the URL listing is presented to the user for use in launching another research session, at the user's choosing; thereafter, when the user logs off, the URL listing is deleted, unless the user takes affirmative action to save the URL listing.~~
26. ~~The system of claim 24 wherein the URLs presented are organized by project name, where such an association exists.~~

26. A browsing method wherein descriptions of web sites saved in association with project names are saved and searchable by keyword, and wherein any matching terms in the descriptions cause URLs for these web sites to be presented in a form which may be selected by a user in order to launch a research session.

27. The browsing method of claim 26 wherein the URLs presented are organized by project name.

28. A system for performing research, the system comprising a computer and storage media encoded with a method which, when researching the Internet, and upon the input of a project name, associates contiguous online time with the particular project name, wherein the URLs of web sites which the user downloads for viewing will be recorded in a record in association with the project name.

29. The system of claim 28, wherein the user is provided with means to temporarily save URLs to sites which are potentially irrelevant to a current project name, for access after completion of the current research under the current project name.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein the user may save any temporarily saved URLs in association with a special project name such as PERSONAL to which there is limited or no access by others.

31. A browsing method which associates online research to a project name, the method utilizing a search engine and searchable research summaries including URLs and associated descriptions which are available for key-word searching when the user is not connected to the Internet, the method creating a preliminary listing of URLs which the user may later save in association with the project name.

32. A computer system encoded with a browsing method for managing a research session on the Internet in which information is requested from a downloaded page, called the current downloaded page, by activating and clicking a hypertext link on the current downloaded page, wherein, after a user activates the link, input reception means is presented to the user, said means providing for the input of alphanumeric characters identifying a project to which at least the navigation history of the research session is to be associated, or for confirmation of association with alphanumeric characters already input, and when such characters are received or the association with the already input characters is confirmed, the method downloads the requested information in association with the alphanumeric characters.

33. The system of claim 32 wherein, after the alphanumeric characters are received and the research session is commenced, when a link is activated that is associated with a different root URL as compared to the current downloaded page, thus indicating the likelihood of different content, at least one input window is presented to the user which queries the user whether the new to-be-downloaded page will be associated with the current project name or a new project name or is to be saved as a TBM and the current research continued.

33. A browsing method encoded on a computer-readable medium, for managing Internet research, characterized in that an ordinary user is required to input a project name for association with the user's research, and if such research is of a personal nature, an access control matrix limits access to the Internet for such research to substantially non-work hours.

34. The method of claim 1, wherein, to economize display screen space and computer memory, the research summary includes shortcuts to folders of global links common to a particular type of research, thus not requiring duplication of these common links in each project research summary yet providing easy access to common links.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the shortcuts may be dragged and dropped into the URL listing using a project management subroutine controlled by a sub-interface.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein a shortcut is hypertext-type link to a single folder having links of particular interest to the current project.

37. The method of claim 1 wherein the method operates on a computer system generally having a mouse with a right and a left mouse button, and wherein, if a user clicks once on a hypertext anchor of a web page using the left mouse button or analogous action, the method reminds the user of the project name and solicits the user's confirmation that the download, which the user indicated he wished to initiate by his clicking on the link, is to be associated with the current project name or a new project name.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the method, having downloaded the web page having content, solicits the user's comments concerning the content of the downloaded page, the solicitation being made via an input field in an input window, these comments being available for key word searching and to indicate to a user the content of the web page.

39. The method of claim 1 wherein a user may review a current web page without being queried to attribute the web page to a project name until the user has finished reviewing the current page, indicated by his having activated an anchor tag or URL pointing the browser to another web page.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the querying is not made when the pointed-to page is a subdomain of the current page.

41. The method of claim 39, wherein the user is queried as to whether the URL associated with an activated anchor tag should be saved as a Temporary Bookmark, prior to downloading the selected data at the URL.

42. The method of claim 39, wherein, after review of the current page, the user is queried as to whether the downloaded data is to be associated with the current project name or a new project name.

43. The method of claim 39, wherein, after review of the current page, an input field is presented to the user permitting the user to input keywords and/or comments regarding the current page, thus providing the user the opportunity to contemporaneously comment on the current page before downloading the pointed-to page.

44. The method of claim 1 wherein the method operates on a computer system generally having a mouse with a right and a left mouse button, and wherein, if a user clicks once on a hypertext anchor of a web page using the left mouse button or analogous action, the method reminds the user of the project name and solicits the user's confirmation that the current downloaded page, which the user had previously initiated, is to be associated with the current project name or a new project name, thus permitting tracking and soliciting, receiving and storing comments, such as key words, metatags, or descriptive terms regarding site content for use in identifying the site.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein the method provides a menu option by which a user can change setting to suppress the dialog window which otherwise would be presented upon activating a link, and after having been so suppressed, no dialog window is presented upon activating a link, the window only appearing when the user clicks on the right mouse button, the method automatically associating the URL of a downloaded page with the current project name.

46. The method of claim 1, wherein URLs that are saved in association with a project name are automatically deleted after a predetermined period of time, given that the following conditions are met:

- (a) the to-be-deleted URLs are not pre-packaged URLs or otherwise useful across projects, and
- (b) the user has made no comment or input no keyword regarding the site,

47. The method of claim 46, wherein the following steps are performed:

- a. a URL is saved as part of a data listing including other URLs, together with an associated time tag;
- b. the time tags are scanned in the data listing and all URLs in the listing that are of a predetermined age are marked;
- c. the comment field in the data structure of each marked URL are checked and if the comment field is empty, the marked URL is deleted.

47. The method according to claim 1 having an archiving feature wherein links in the research summary that haven't been activated for a predetermined period of time are deleted to an archiving file such as a dedicated archive or a waste basket which permits a user to restore the link at a later time.

48. The method of claim 1, wherein comments may be saved in association with a document, such as an HTML document, for display to users who download this content.

49. The method of claim 48 wherein navigation icons are provided to enable a user to navigate from one site to another according to an sequence created by a prior user or users.

50. A browsing method of claim 1, wherein the method:

- (a) interacts with a browser operating on a client terminal;
- (b) operates on a server which uploads a generic interface to the client terminal;
- (c) queries the user for a project name and a user name;
- (d) creates, upon input of the project name and the user name, a folder in association with this project name and tracks online activity in association with the project folder;
- (e) optionally allows the creation of subfolders under the project name folder, in a tree-like structure; and
- (f) includes means for saving files such as text documents, graphics, and spreadsheet documents under the project name folder or subfolder.

51. The method of claim 50 wherein the online activity associated with multiple users is merged according to the tree structure wherein folders with matching subproject names are merged.

52. The method of the above claim wherein a rights management module manages copyright in content produced.